

Mayhall. I wish continued success to Mrs. Mayhall and the COP program.

LET'S BE TRULY COMPASSIONATE

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2009

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about a very important bill that I just re-introduced, the Visitors Interested in Strengthening America (VISA) Act of 2009 (H.R. 937). The bill would grant humanitarian visa waivers to children and their parents coming across the border for regular medical appointments, or for educational or cultural events.

In the past, the Port Directors at the border had the authority to grant humanitarian visa waivers to certain children and their accompanying parent. Now, children who come without a visa must be turned away. The fee to enter into the United States for 24 hours is an insurmountable amount of money for these poor children and their families. These children pose no threat to our national security. They are merely trying to receive medical treatment or to enjoy a school field trip to one of our nation's numerous tourist attractions.

This legislation does not affect the number of legal or illegal immigrants living in the United States—the children and accompanying adults visit for one day and then return to their homes. It gives Port Directors the authority to use their discretion, and issue waivers to children that pose no security threat to our country.

This is common sense legislation that allows us to cultivate relations with our Mexican neighbors, while keeping those who would do us harm out of our country. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this critical legislation, by co-sponsoring the VISA Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2009

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately yesterday, February 11, 2009, I was unable to cast my votes on H. Con. Res. 47, H. Res. 154, and H.R. 448.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 60, on passing H. Con. Res. 47, Providing for an adjournment or recess of the two Houses, I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 61, on suspending the rules and passing H. Res. 154, Honoring JOHN D. DINGELL for holding the record as the longest serving member of the House of Representatives, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 62, on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 448, the Elder Abuse Victims Act, I would have voted "aye."

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL ENGINEERS WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2009

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today in support of this resolution recognizing National Engineers Week and the important contributions to society made by engineers. A range of activities and programs highlighting Engineers Week will be taking place across the country. Communities, schools, and museums will host events to excite young people about engineering by helping them see the role this discipline plays in the world around them.

This resolution and National Engineers Week come at a fitting time. We are in a dire economic situation, in part because of a failure to sufficiently support science and engineering in the past. Research and development will be the foundation for the discoveries that will fuel our economic recovery and sustain our long term economic growth. Engineering is often the critical bridge between the basic science and the productive innovation or the marketable product. It is entirely proper that we acknowledge this important field at this critical time.

National Engineers Week is the most visible event in an ongoing, year-round effort by the National Engineers Week Foundation to support and encourage interest in engineering and technology. As Congress supports the excellent programming of National Engineers week, it should follow the Foundation's lead in making a commitment to science, research, engineering, and education. Congress should work to ensure that all individuals who choose to pursue an education in engineering and related fields have the opportunity to do so. And Congress should fully fund the America COMPETES Act and make a sustained investment in our national innovation infrastructure.

This resolution recognizes the value of National Engineers Week and engineering-related disciplines generally. I am delighted to support it.

CELEBRATING FILIPINO AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2009

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about a resolution that I have re-introduced along with Congressmen BILBRAY, HONDA, ISSA, and BOBBY SCOTT, my colleagues in the U.S.-Philippines Friendship Caucus (H. Res. 155). This resolution recognizes Filipino American Heritage Month and celebrates the heritage and culture of Filipino Americans and their immense contributions to our nation.

The Filipino American National Historical Society established Filipino American History Month in 1988 but I was surprised to learn that the House of Representatives has never recognized this month, which is long overdue!

We are pleased to honor the Filipino American community and pay tribute to the extraordinary contributions that Filipinos make to this nation. Filipino Americans have been part of the American experience, confronting many difficult challenges while being resolute and steadfast in their cultural heritage.

We honor Filipino Americans, from farm workers to nurses and doctors to the brave and courageous soldiers who fought shoulder-to-shoulder with American servicemen. This country is indebted to the Filipino veterans of World War II for their extraordinary sacrifices. We promise that we will not give up. Equity and recognition for World War II Veterans is a moral imperative.

I invite my colleagues to join with me in honoring the history, culture, and contribution of Filipino Americans in the United States by supporting this important resolution.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CENTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2009

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Center United Methodist Church was founded in 1858 with 17 members convening at the Pleasant Site School in Cambridge, and

Whereas, originally called the Harmony Methodist Episcopal Church, the congregation grew quickly to more than 200 members and in 1869, prompting the congregation to build its structure on the site where it currently stands, and

Whereas, the Center United Methodist Church operated continuously for 150 years under various names, continuously growing and expanding its congregation and its building to better accommodate its service to the community. The church has been an active community presence, initiating and contributing to numerous religious, community, and international; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that along with the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend the Center United Methodist Church for 150 years of dedicated service to the practice of the Christian faith and to the good works, both local and international, that have given the congregation a wonderful reputation and a sense of pride.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MERCED ASSEMBLY CENTER

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 129, recognizing the historical significance of the Merced Assembly Center to the Nation and the importance of establishing an appropriate memorial at that site to serve as a place for remembering the hardships endured by Japanese-Americans, so that the United States remains vigilant in protecting our Nation's core

values of equality, due process of law, justice and fundamental fairness. This resolution embodies the ideals and precepts that we hold so dear in the United States. I support this resolution and I strongly encourage my colleagues to do the same.

As a Senior member of the House Judiciary Committee and a member of the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties, I know the importance of due process, fairness, and equality. Indeed, as a child of the Civil Rights Movement, I have championed these uniquely American precepts that are the bedrock of our Democracy. We must never forget this fundamental infringement of civil rights that had a deleterious and one-sided effect upon a race of Americans. We must never forget so that we will never repeat the tragic horrors of that era. Spawned by a fear of a race during a time of war, this Great Country was led to do act and behave toward a race in a way that we must never allow again.

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9066, authorizing the forced internment of both United States citizens and legal residents of Japanese ancestry during World War II. This Executive Order resulted in the largest single relocation of individuals in the history of our Nation. As a result of this relocation, 120,000 Japanese-Americans were forced into internment camps by the United States Government in violation of their fundamental constitutional rights.

Japanese-Americans faced tremendous hardships due to their unjust treatment. The hardships this group faced were reminiscent of the days of slavery where families were torn asunder and faced separation. Individuals endured the loss of their homes, businesses, jobs, and their dignity.

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 9066, Japanese-Americans in the western United States, specifically Washington, Oregon, California, and southern Arizona were ordered to report to so called assembly centers before being removed to more permanent wartime relocation centers.

The Merced Assembly Center, located in Merced, California, was the reporting site for nearly 5,000 Japanese-Americans. Sadly, as a child, United States Congressman MIKE HONDA and his family were held at the Merced Assembly Center prior to being interned in Amache, Colorado. Through this tragedy and sadness, and in spite of this situation, Representative HONDA forged a public career dedicated to educating and preventing this type of injustice from ever occurring again in this great country.

The Merced Assembly Center Commemorative Committee has been charged with the task of establishing a memorial to recognize the historic tragedy that took place at the Merced Assembly Center. The unveiling ceremony for the memorial at the Merced Assembly Center will take place on February 21, 2009.

I stand today to support this resolution. As a champion of civil rights for all Americans, I will continue to fight to ensure that Americans are treated fairly, humanely, and to the letter of the Constitution. I urge my colleagues to stand with me today to support this resolution and to continue to fight against prejudice in this country. As Members of Congress, we must never forget the injustice of the Japa-

nese internment in this country and all of us need to continue in the fight to ensure that all Americans are treated fairly under law without regard to the race, color, creed, sexual orientation or any other form of differentiation.

Mr. Speaker. I support this bill and urge my colleagues to do the same.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAIRNESS FOR MILITARY RECRUITERS ACT

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2009

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Fairness for Military Recruiters Act, legislation that supports the efforts of our armed forces to recruit talented young Americans from our nation's high schools. This legislation reaffirms and strengthens existing federal law, enacted in 2001 under the No Child Left Behind Act, that provides military recruiters the same access to high school campuses and basic student contact information that is given to institutions of higher education.

Before the enactment of No Child Left Behind, it was reported that nearly 2,000 high schools across the country either banned military recruiters from their campuses or restricted access to student directories. Since then, despite some early opposition from several school boards and administrators, military recruiters have maintained regular and unrestricted access to high schools nationwide.

Under current law, any high school that receives federal education funding must provide military recruiters access to its campus and student directories—the same access that is provided to colleges and universities. At the same time, schools are required to notify parents and students of their right to “opt-out” of the program. A request from a parent is all it takes for a student not be contacted or approached directly by a military recruiter.

This is a straightforward, balanced approach to ensuring that students are familiar with the education and career opportunities offered by any one of our military service branches. Military service promotes discipline, self-esteem and a strong work-ethic, and young Americans should not be discouraged from serving their country or simply exploring the benefits of serving in the armed forces.

Of course, there are some school administrators and activist groups that oppose the idea of military recruiters contacting high-school students. There are even reported cases of these groups, known as “counter-recruiters,” attending parent-teacher conferences and loitering outside schools with opt-out forms in hand. Likewise, administrators have creatively interpreted notification and consent requirements in the interest of denying recruiters access to student contact information.

Students and parents should make the decision to opt-out on their own, without influence from activists and administrators with anti-military bias. Families that recognize and honor the commitment of our military to defending the freedom of the American people should not be represented by the small minority of those who actively seek to denigrate our armed forces.

The legislation I am introducing today simply reaffirms current law by protecting the right of

parents and students to opt-out while also maintaining military recruiter access to high school campuses and directories. Schools would still be obligated to notify parents and students of their options, ensuring there is a mechanism in place that prevents the contact information of those who wish not to be contacted from being released.

The alternative suggested by some of my colleagues, particularly in anticipation of the upcoming reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, is to create an opt-in process. In other words, military recruiters would be denied access to student information unless parents send in a release authorization form. They question whether the recruitment provision violates a student's right to privacy, even though it is consistent with federal law and court-tested privacy rights. An analysis by the Congressional Research Services also acknowledges this fact, noting that, unlike medical records, the basic information available to recruiters is no different than the information “typically found in a phone book.”

The legislation specifically prohibits the implementation of an opt-in process and clarifies the notification and consent requirement by placing the personal information and career interests of students firmly in the control of parents. Only parents, legal guardians or students 18 years of age, could make a written request that contact information not be released.

Madam Speaker, our national security continues to hinge on patriotic and talented Americans coming forward and volunteering military service. Restricting recruiter access to high schools would serve to reduce the quality of our armed forces and undoubtedly constrain the ability of students to consider military education and career opportunities.

I urge my colleagues to support this effort as we continue working to strengthen our national security and raise awareness about the education and career benefits provided through military service.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FAIRMOUNT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2009

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker: Whereas, the Fairmount Presbyterian Church was founded in 1833 by the Nickel family and is celebrating its 175th anniversary in Licking Township, Ohio; and

Whereas, the congregation of 25 celebrated that milestone with a special service on September 21st and a recreation of a famous photo of the congregation on the mound next to the church taken in 1923, and

Whereas, the founding of the Fairmount Presbyterian Church occurred when one member of the Nickel family passed the spot of land where it now sits and remarked that it was the “prettiest place” he had ever seen. Three years later, the land that serves as the parish's cemetery was donated, creating the Fairmount Cemetery adjacent to the historic church; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that along with the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend